Remarks

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-41 are pending in the application. Claims 21-29, 40 and 41 are withdrawn as from consideration as being drawn to non-elected subject matter. Claims 1-20 and 30-39 stand rejected. By this paper, claims 1 and 30 have been amended. For the reasons set forth below, Applicant submits that each of the pending claims is patentably distinct from the cited prior art and in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 8-16, 18-20, and 30-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,434,171 issued to Ishida ("Ishida"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because Ishida fails to identically teach every element of the claims. See M.P.E.P. § 2131 (stating that in order to anticipate a claim, a prior art reference must identically teach every element of the claim).

An aspect of the independent claims of the present application relates to receiving media streams from multiple sources through different paths (e.g., a first stream receiver and a second stream receiver), while decoding the media streams with a single decoder. Applicant respectfully submits, however, that Ishida is silent as to the subject matter of the claims. Rather, as discussed in detail below, FIG. 5 of Ishida teaches decoding audio/video program information using a decoder 47 and decoding service information (e.g., used to identify and separate out a channel to be viewed in the audio/video program information) using a CPU 67.

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Ishida teaches transmitting audio/video program information (e.g., digital television broadcast programs, digital audio broadcast programs and on-demand service programs) and service information (SI) to a digital set-top box (DSTB). Col. 1, lines 14-24. The SI is control information necessary for selecting a desired program from a plurality of programs multiplexed in the audio/video program information, decoding the program, and reproducing it. Col. 1, lines 29-32.

To avoid exceeding the maximum transmission rate allowed for the transmission path, Ishida teaches detecting when the maximum transmission rate is exceeded and reducing the transmission rate by transmitting at least a portion of the SI using a different frequency than the program information. Col. 2, lines 24-33 and 53-62. A first portion of the service information SI' may be sent at a first frequency with the program information and a second portion of the program information SI" may be sent at a second frequency. Col. 7, lines 27-34.

FIG. 5 of Ishida shows a DSTB used to receive the program information and the service information (e.g., SI' and SI"). A first tuner 42 receives the audio/video information and SI' so they can be demodulated by a demodulator 43 and sent to a demultiplexer 45 where a CPU designates which of the multiplexed programs will be separated out for viewing. Col. 7, lines 61-67 to col. 7, lines 1-7. The selected program is then sent to a decoder 47 where it is decoded, e.g., "the decoder restores an audio/video signal, which has been compressed in accordance with the MPEG-2 scheme." Col. 8, lines 8-11 (emphasis added). As shown in FIG. 6 and discussed below, the SI' is sent from the demultiplexer 45 to the CPU 67.

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A second tuner 61 receives the SI" so it can be sent to the demodulator 62 and the CPU 67. The CPU 67 then decodes the SI". See, col. 8, lines 44-45 (stating that the CPU executes descrambling processing, and processing for restoring the service information SI"). Thus, while FIG. 5 of Ishida shows receiving information through two paths (e.g., through the first tuner 42 and the second tuner 61), Ishida teaches that the information is decoded using separate decoders (e.g., the decoder 47 and the CPU 67).

After being decoded, the CPU 67 combines the SI" and the SI' to create the original SI, which the CPU 67 sends back to the demultiplexer 45. Col. 8, lines 59-64. Contrary to the assertion made on page 3 of the Office Action, the demultiplexer does not then select between sending the SI or the audio/video signal to the decoder 47. Rather, as discussed above, the audio/video signal is sent to the decoder 47 for decoding. The SI is a control signal used by the demultiplexer and/or the decoder 47 "to make it possible to correctly decode and reproduce the audio/video of a program selected by the user." Col. 11, lines 26-28.

Thus, Ishida does not teach or suggest, a "set top box (STB) for decoding media streams from multiple sources, the STB comprising: a processor; a hardware decoder, coupled to the processor, for decoding media streams; a first stream receiver configured to receive a media stream from a first source; a second stream receiver configured to receive a media stream from a second source; and a stream selector having first and second inputs and an output, the first input coupled to the first stream receiver, the second input coupled to the second stream receiver, and the output coupled to the hardware decoder, wherein the stream selector is configured to selectively direct one of the media streams to the hardware decoder under control of the processor, and wherein

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the hardware decoder is configured to decode the selected output from the stream

selector," as recited in amended claim 1. (Emphasis added.) Rather, as discussed

above, the demultiplexer 45 merely selects a program to be viewed from the media

stream provided through the path with the first tuner 42.

Similarly, Ishida does not teach or suggest "using a stream selector...to

selectively direct one of the media streams to the hardware decoder for decoding," as

recited, among other things, in claim 11. Nor does Ishida teach or suggest "wherein the

stream selection means are configured to selectively direct one of the media streams to

the decoding means under control of the processing means, and wherein the decoding

means is configured to decode the selected output from the stream selection means,"

as recited, among other things, in amended claim 30. Further, Ishida does not teach or

suggest "a selector for selecting between an output of the first processing path

and an output of the second processing path; and a decoder for decoding selected

output from the selector," as recited, among other things, in claim 31.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 11, 30 and

31 are not anticipated by Ishida and respectfully requests that the rejections be

withdrawn. For at least the same reasons discussed above, each of the claims

depending from claims 1, 11, 30 and 31 are also patentably distinct, whether under 35

U.S.C. § 102 or § 103, from the cited prior art.

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In view of the foregoing, all pending claims represent patentable subject matter.

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Digeo, Inc.

By _____

Kory D. Christensen
Registration No. 43,548

STOEL RIVES LLP
One Utah Center Suite 1100
201 S Main Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84111-4904
Telephone: (801) 328-3131
Facsimile: (801) 578-6999

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